

Congress has played an important role. In fiscal year 2000 alone, \$4 billion has been recovered on defaulted loans through vigorous collection efforts by the Department of Education and the loan guaranty agencies. Congress authorized the use of offsetting Federal income tax refunds, wage garnishment, and other methods to aid in the collection of these loans.

What is important, however, is that defaulters also have the opportunity to get out of default through loan consolidation and the opportunity to repay their loans based on their income. We must never burden students with loans they cannot repay, and much of our current as well as future savings will be due to the appropriate use of the carrot as well as the stick.

Declining default rates, increased collections, savings produced by the direct student loan program—when we combine the fruits of all these labors, the end result is that we are saving American taxpayers \$18 billion.

Too often we overlook the good news in education and fail to note the successes of our legislation and its implementation.

Let us take a moment here to offer congratulations to all for the excellent news coming out of higher education this year.

#### DEMOCRATIC EDUCATION AGENDA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Ms. CARSON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. CARSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Democratic education agenda for the 107th Congress.

We live in a changed world: a new economy, new technology, and new family realities. More than ever, we all need our children to achieve their full potential. But our children are not getting the support they need.

Our friends in the majority promised radical improvements for public education when they gained control of the House 6 years ago. They said they would get the government out of our schools, and they followed through on that pledge by trying to abolish the Department of Education.

They continually turned their backs on their responsibility to focus on the priorities of the American people. Saying the Federal government has no place in our public schools did nothing to lift up a child or to help a parent, and the American people rightly rejected their plan.

I quote the distinguished majority leader, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT), when I say, "It is time for a new vision."

While looking forward to the 107th Congress, Democrats will make six new commitments to modernize our public schools and lift up every child:

First, we will recruit and train high quality teachers and principals. Because America's public schools are attended by 90 percent of American children, we need to ensure that every

class is led by a highly-qualified teacher; we also aim to establish new incentives to recruit highly-qualified teachers.

Secondly, we will reduce class size. We will recruit 100,000 highly-qualified teachers and reduce class sizes for grades one through three to a national average of 18 children;

Thirdly, we will build accountability measures to ensure that school districts and States set high standards and help every student achieve by building on proven reforms;

Fourthly, we will build new schools and repair existing ones. The Federal help to renovate 6,000 local public schools and repair an additional 8,300 schools to improve learning conditions is vital to our children's future.

We will aim to expand educational technology. We will continue to provide schools with Internet capacity, and bring new technology into the classrooms.

Finally, we will promote lifelong learning in all of our public schools. Our agenda wants to put America on the path to have preschool universally available to every child, and to bring the dream of a college education closer to reality for everyone by making tuition more affordable through tax relief, and by increasing funds for college grants and loans.

These simple six steps will ensure that our children are guaranteed the education they deserve.

Since coming to the House of Representatives, I have worked to bring Congress to the classroom. Two years ago, I visited Crispus Attucks Junior High School, which was my alma mater. Crispus Attucks is a good example of what can be achieved when people in government are committed to public education and public schools.

The school created a good learning environment and provides training on computers and the Internet.

I worked to have Crispus Attucks High School connected with a school in Darby, United Kingdom, and they are doing a tremendous job because they have similar characteristics, and are getting acquainted in a very vital way with each other.

However, more help is needed. With information technology now a key element of the global economy, we must make sure that our children are prepared to use this technology when they enter the world of work.

The Democratic agenda aims to secure computers for all schools. The future of our children is vital, and Federal help must not be seen as negative big government intervention.

The educator and author Derek Bok once wrote, "If you think education is expensive, try ignorance." Bad House majority policies have cost America dearly. Children are being neglected, and they cannot raise themselves.

We would provide \$1.7 billion for reducing class size. The opposition did

not guarantee one Federal dollar for class size reduction.

We would provide a new \$1 billion teacher quality initiative, whereas the opposition has rejected this proposal and has proposed funding lower than this for two combined programs.

We would provide \$1.3 billion to leverage about \$6.7 billion in grants and loans to fund school renovation. The opposition rejects this approach.

All of our proposals, including funding for after-school programs, safe-and-drug-free schools, accountability and the Head Start and Gear-Up programs have either been rejected or cut dramatically by the House leadership. This is unacceptable.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to stand up for education and for our schools, and work towards a better America for all of our children. If we do not stand up for education and our schools, we will fall for anything.

#### CONGRATULATIONS TO PROFESSOR DANIEL J. MCFADDEN ON WINNING NOBEL PRIZE FOR ECONOMICS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to recognize and to congratulate a distinguished member of the University of California at Berkeley, Professor Daniel J. McFadden.

Last week, Professor McFadden, along with Professor James Heckman of the University of Chicago, received the Nobel Prize for Economics.

Together, through their research and observations, they have contributed significantly to the understanding of individual and societal behavior. Their vital work cuts across disciplinary barriers and greatly enhances our understanding of economics and public policy.

Prior to joining the world of the academic and social sciences community at the University of California at Berkeley in 1963, Professor McFadden, like many of us, attended public school.

As a young man during his college years, he was always attracted to the studies of human behavior. His passion for the field of behavioral sciences and the drive to learn and analyze human behavior helped launch an ambitious career and a lifelong commitment to the study of behavioral and social sciences.

Subsequently, Dr. McFadden developed and linked these behavioral theories to mathematics, statistics, and economics.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud and honored to congratulate and recognize Professor McFadden for this lifetime of achievements. His dedication and his outstanding work in economics have

contributed significantly to our society.

The implications of his research extend far beyond the ivory tower. Because of his efforts, governmental agencies and city planners in the United States are able to make better decisions about health care services, social services, employment programs, transportation, and other critical areas of modern life.

The cities of the San Francisco-Oakland Bay area, for example, owe a great deal of the work to Professor McFadden in terms of his research in helping to shape the design of our Bay Area Rapid Transit commuter train system, which is very crucial to tens of thousands of people for their daily commute to work.

Professor Daniel McFadden joins 16 other Berkeley colleagues as Nobel Prize winners. This impressive roster of intellectuals also demonstrates the commitment of this university to the larger social and economic world. As an alumna of the University of California at Berkeley, I am especially proud of these accomplishments.

Mr. Speaker, once again, I congratulate Professor McFadden for his Nobel Prize award. I appreciate having this opportunity to express my appreciation for the hard work and commitment of our most recent Nobel Prize winner in economics, Professor Daniel J. McFadden.

#### EDUCATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from the Virgin Islands (Mrs. CHRISTENSEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak on the Congress education agenda, or lack of one.

Two months ago, the Nation's schools opened their doors to the largest number of students in history. Yet, the Nation began the 2000-2001 academic year facing a national education crisis.

Our teachers and students are struggling to teach and learn in underfunded, inadequate, substandard, and crowded conditions. The average American school building is now more than 40 years old, and the estimated price tag to bring our schools into good condition is \$127 billion.

Many of our Nation's communities, like my own, are working to build and modernize schools, but they lack or have very limited funding.

Our President has proposed a school construction tax credit to help communities build and modernize 6,000 schools, and grants and loans for emergency repairs to nearly 5,000 schools a year for 5 years. This school construction relief has bipartisan support in the House of Representatives, and needs to be voted on.

Mr. Speaker, there is also substantial support in the House of Representatives for H.R. 4094, the Rangel-Johnson bill, which would amend the Tax Code to provide incentives for school construction and modernization. It has more than 225 cosponsors. I ask my colleagues to include the provisions of that bill in the final agreement, as well.

But school modernization and reconstruction is only a beginning. Mr. Speaker, in the district of the Virgin Islands, which I represent, just under 3,000 members of the American Federation of Teachers are in the fifth day of a strike for retroactive wages and better working conditions.

When our teachers strike, our students suffer. We need the Federal government to help us in many areas so we can better address our teachers' very valid concerns and their long overdue salary increases.

We in the Congressional Black Caucus have an important education agenda. We are calling for a public school emergency recovery program, which comprehensively addresses the needs of our poorest and most needy schools. It will cost \$10 billion of the surplus.

The schools in my and other districts need this help. It is more important than a tax break for the richest 1 percent in our country, and it is a much better and more effective way to address the needs of education than our vouchers, which at best is a risky deflection of funding from public schools, where most of our Nation's children are educated.

Mr. Speaker, my daughter Rabiah is a second grade teacher at Barnard School here in the District, a school that would benefit from the CBC's proposed initiative. This week, she and other teachers are being sent home. She had 22 students in her class. Barnard School and many others need more teachers, not less, to meet the needs of their children.

The time has come for us to send a message across the Nation that our children are a priority and that we value and will invest in the education that they receive. We need to pass a budget that reflects investment in school modernization, that addresses the needs of our teachers by creating smaller classes, by increasing opportunities for training, by giving them more support staffing and programs, and by providing incentives to keep good teachers in our classrooms.

I urge our leadership to follow the will of the majority of the Members of this House by bringing to the floor and passing an education budget that fully responds to the real education needs of all segments of our Nation.

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I echo the President's call for continued work to strengthen accountability and raise test scores; to turn around

failing schools or shut them down or put them under new management; to expand after school programs and college opportunities for young people; and to ensure a qualified teacher in every class.

Mr. Speaker, as we come to the end of this session of Congress, we will be saying good-bye to several of our colleagues. One of them is a steadfast champion of education as well as labor, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY). As he leaves the House after his years of distinguished service, he leaves us in this country an outstanding legacy which includes enacting legislation to strengthen Head Start, elementary and secondary education programs, and college financial aid programs, as well as many other mainstays of American education.

I can think of no more fitting tribute to his service than passing landmark funding for this Nation's public schools and creating the Congressional Black Caucus' public school emergency recovery program.

Mr. Speaker, the outcome of our end-of-the-term negotiations this year must begin with an education budget that ensures a 21st century education for each and every one of our Nation's children, truly leaving not one of them behind.

#### GOVERNMENT MUST DO MORE TO IMPROVE EDUCATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DICKY). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mr. OWENS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, for the past few years, the American people have, through numerous focus groups and polls, sent a strong message to all elected officials. Government must do more to improve education. Government at every level, the local level, the State level, and at the Federal level must do more to improve education.

Now we are finally approaching the closing days of the 106th Congress, the scandal of this session of Congress is that, despite the existence of a \$230 billion Federal surplus, to date, the Republican majority has refused to respond to the clear demand of the American voters.

The Republicans have chosen to move in the opposite direction. Republican inaction is sabotaging the Federal effort to improve our schools. Even long-standing programs, such as ESEA Title I have not been reauthorized by this Republican-controlled Congress. Only destructive proposals are being placed on the negotiations table by the Republicans.

Publicly funded school vouchers and block grants are two of the most dangerous Republican proposals on the table. Both of these radical programs will hasten the demise of the public school systems in our Nation.